TSITIKA MOUNTAIN ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

March 2003

Approved by:

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Date: Mar 31/03

TSITIKA MOUNTAIN ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
Purpose Statement

Ecological reserves are areas selected to preserve representative and special natural ecosystems, plant and animal species, features and phenomena. The key goal of ecological reserves is to contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity and the protection of genetic materials. All consumptive resource uses and the use of motorized vehicles are prohibited. Research and educational activities may be carried out but only under permit.

Primary Role

The **primary** role of Tsitika Mountain Ecological Reserve is to protect representative montane and subalpine forest and bog communities. The lower elevation area of the ecological reserve is poorly drained and has a boggy lake that is flanked by two slopes. The lower elevations support extensive areas of subalpine fen and wet scrub forest around the lake and on gentler slopes. A subalpine forest is more prevalent on steeper slopes, interspersed with parallel strips of fen vegetation rising from the lake toward Tsitika Mountain. Numerous small ponds have formed in a terrace arrangement in the open areas due to high snowpack. Many alpine and subalpine species occur here at an unusually low elevation. Better drained and higher slopes are occupied by a variety of mountain hemlock-amabilis fir communities. Alpine vegetation is restricted due to the rocky terrain at high elevation.

Mammals recorded from this area include goldeneye, mew gull, black-tailed deer, cougar and wolf.

Together with Lower Tsitika River Park, Mount Derby Ecological Reserve and Robson Bight (Michael Bigg) Ecological Reserve, much of the lower end of the Tsitika River has been protected.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Impact of adjacent logging and enhanced access resulting in recreation use on the natural values of the ecological reserve	➢ Work with forest companies to ensure that forest harvesting activity does not impact the ecological reserve and does not increase access to the ecological reserve. ➢ Ensure ecological reserve boundaries are marked.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Tsitika Mountain contributes 1.13% to the representation of the Northern Island Mountains Ecosection (NIM), which is under represented at 9.1%. The ecological reserve is one of 18 protected areas that contribute to the representation of NIM. When treated as a contiguous protected area in conjunction with Lower Tsitika River Park, Robson Bight ER, and Mount Derby ER, its contribution to the representation of NIM increases to 10.1%.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Minimal contribution (0.35%) to the representation of CWHvm2 which has only 8.7% of its area protected. It also makes fairly insignificant contributions to the representation of MHmm1 and ATunp.
Special Features	☒	Unique plant communities
Rare/Endangered Values	☐	None known at this time
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Ongoing studies on hydrology

Recreation

Representation		
backcountry	☐	Not Applicable
destination	☐	Not Applicable
travel corridor	☐	Not Applicable
local recreation	☐	Not Applicable
Special Opportunities	☐	Not Applicable
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	Offsite – plant communities

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☐	Values unknown
Special Feature	☐	None known at this time

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	Not Applicable
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of ecological reserves on Vancouver Island and in British Columbia

Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	Not Applicable
Partnerships	☒	Volunteer ecological reserve warden
Vulnerability	☒	Vulnerable to adjacent logging; increased access may introduce undesired recreational impacts on ecological reserve values
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	This site was one of six identified in the Tsitika River drainage by the Tsitika Planning Team in 1970s

Area: 554 hectares

Date of establishment: August 10, 1989